



# Safety Matters!

Welcome Edition

Version 10

## Welcome to the University - a Safety First Employer

As University Safety Officer, and on behalf of the Safety Committee and the team in the Safety Office, I would like to welcome you to the University. The University is committed to building safety into the way we think and work. Consequently I hope your time here will be enjoyable, and above all, safe.

The purpose of this welcome newsletter is to draw your attention to some key health and safety items that you might find helpful to you during your period at the University. There are also several matters that we are required by health and safety legislation to bring to your attention, principally the University's health and safety policy and the organisational

arrangements for implementing it. In including these in this newsletter I have attempted to make the detail more "reader-friendly".

This newsletter is issued, prior to or on arrival, to all new staff and postgraduate students who will have access to the University's computer network. There is a large amount of safety information readily available from

the Safety Office Web Page, which offers the best way of providing up to date information that is relevant to the diverse individual needs. Consequently you will not be given a personal copy of the University Safety Handbook but this is available from the Safety Office Web Page: <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/safety/handbook.htm>



John Sutherland,  
University Safety Officer

Throughout this newsletter the web addresses for further information are given. I hope that you will put aside some time during your first day or so to look at the information relevant to your work and support the health and safety induction that you will receive in your School or Department.

### Contents

**Emergency Procedures**



**Safety and Occupational Health at the University Page 3**



**Safety at Display Screen Workstations Page 4**



## Health and Safety and You!

The key to controlling the risks associated with work lies in the way we think and work, whatever our position and responsibilities. This requires the careful application of the many procedures and precautions that have been developed over time in response to health and safety legislation, evolution of good practice and experience both here and across the university sector. Underpinning this are the management arrangements to set standards and monitor their implementation. This framework is briefly described in this section.

The University Council is the employing body and carries the ultimate legal responsibility for health and safety. Responsibility for discharging this is devolved through the line management organisation. The University Council has appointed the Chief Financial Officer to be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the University Safety Policy.

The immediate managerial responsibility for safety within any work area is borne by the appropriate Head of School who is responsible for ensuring that arrangements for safe working within their area have been set up and published. These ar-

rangements form part of the University Safety Policy.

The University's policies on health and safety are developed and monitored by the Safety Committee, which reports to Council. Once a policy has been approved by Council responsibility for implementing it is delegated to Heads of School/Hall Managers as appropriate.

Larger Schools, or those with a more diverse range of hazards, have set up local safety committees to assist the Head of School in establishing and maintaining a safe working environment. There is also usually a School Safety Officer and

in many cases divisional or sectional safety officers. These individuals have a key role in co-ordinating the local safety arrangements and act as a first source of advice.

Schools may raise issues for discussion at Safety Committee via either the Safety Officer or their faculty or function representative.

For the purpose of consultation and co-operation a separate committee, the Statutory Safety Committee, has been established. Membership is made up of appropriate University Officers and Safety Representatives appointed by all the

*(Continued on page 2)*

(continued from page 1)

recognised trade unions. Items can be placed on the agenda by both management and safety representatives. It provides a forum for formal consultation on safety matters with employees via the safety representative and for matters of concern to be raised. This committee can forward issues to the Safety Committee for consideration.

The University Safety Office provides a central source of advice and monitors standards. It also works closely with the University's occupational health provider.

The Students' Union employs a full-time Health and Safety Adviser to support the development of safety in the various activities undertaken by its affiliated clubs and societies and the Union's commercial

activities. A safety liaison group reporting to the Safety Committee enables the University to monitor, and where necessary support, the promotion of good safety standards in these activities.

**Your Personal Contribution**

Whilst the University will set the framework for safety, the success of this in controlling workplace risks depends upon the commitment of each member of the University to the careful consideration and application of the safety measures related to their work. Health and safety legislation places statutory responsibilities on employers and employees alike to ensure that the work is carried out safely, thus avoiding endangering themselves or others through their work. If you have any queries on safety matters consult the appropriate safety officer.

## Emergency Procedures

In the event of a **fire or accident** involving injury to a person or damage to property follow the directions set out below. These directions apply specifically to the University Park, Jubilee, Medical School, King's Meadow and Sutton Bonington campuses. At other locations the appropriate local arrangements should be followed.

### Accident

In an emergency or in case of serious injury dial **8888** and ask for an ambulance. In embedded units at QMC call the **QMC Emergency Number 2222** - this can be used for any emergency.

For less serious injuries that require medical attention the injured person should attend the Accident and Emergency Department at the Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham.

Where minor injuries have been sustained a first aider should be summoned. Lists of local first aiders and contact details are displayed in the buildings.

### Incident Reporting

There is a reporting system for accidents, work-related ill-health, dangerous occurrences and fires. Forms for this are widely available, usually at the School or Departmental Office although these may be held in other locations too. The location for your workplace will be made known to you during your induction.

If you come across defects or problems around the University campuses, please report to the Estate Office Helpdesk on ext. 16666 or works request:

<http://winster.nottingham.ac.uk/estateshelpdesk/>

## The University Health and Safety Policy Statement

As a leading research based University, this institution is committed to the achievement of a high quality of provision in all aspects of its activity. The University recognises that health and safety is an integral part of this. Consequently the University will ensure that the health and safety aspects of its activity are given equal consideration with the other aspects of its activity in order that the health and safety of its employees and all other persons who use its premises, including students, visitors and contractors, may be protected.

Workplace injuries and ill health can be prevented by the application of an effective risk control strategy. The success of this depends upon the full participation of all members of the University in ensuring that the health and safety implications of the work for which they are responsible, at whatever level, has been accounted for.

The University, through its organisational structure, will seek to ensure that the risks arising out of its activities are identified and that the necessary controls, physical or procedural, are provided, along with the training and supervision needed to support them. The effective functioning of its safety organisation will be audited by the University. The University will participate in consultation which it recognises as part of the means for achieving a co-operative effort at all levels of the organisation in securing effective control over health and safety risks. The University Council, as employer, carries the ultimate responsibility for safety in the University. The Chief Financial Officer has been appointed by Council to be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the University Safety Policy.

Safety is a line management responsibility and the immediate responsibility for safety within any work area is borne by the appropriate Head of School, or Administrative or Support Services Section. The foregoing persons are responsible for ensuring that arrangements for safe working within their areas have been set up and published. These local arrangements form part of the University Safety Policy.

Mr C. Thompson, Chief Financial Officer.

When calling for the emergency services state clearly where the service is required, and to prevent misunderstanding ask for the message to be read back.

In particular please state :

- Building name,
- Floor number,
- Laboratory or room no.,
- Your name.

## Fire Evacuation Procedures

### On Discovering a Fire

- (a) Raise the alarm by operating the nearest break glass call point.
- (b) Dial **8888** (internal telephone) stating the location of the fire. *(In the Nottingham Medical School and QMC/City Hospital embedded units, dial 2222. Refer to local procedures for remote sites)*
- (c) Attack the fire with nearest appropriate extinguisher if safe to do so and your escape route is clear.

### On Hearing the Alarm

- (a) Where in operation, staff should collect the FIRE TOKEN for their area and check that it has been cleared, if safe to do so.
  - (b) Leave the building immediately *(with the exception of the Medical School)*. Do not use lifts. Do not stop to collect personal belongings.
  - (b) Close all doors and windows when leaving.
  - (c) Report to your assembly point.
- (In the Nottingham Medical School, if the tone is **continuous**, check your immediate area and prepare to move into an adjoining compartment. If the tone is **intermittent** the alarm is in an adjoining zone - do not pass through the steel doors into a zone with a continuous alarm tone.)*



## Numbers to Remember

**8888 Emergencies**  
(External - 951 8888)

|  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <b>13013 Security</b>                              | <b>16666 Estate Office Helpdesk</b> |
| <b>13401 Safety Office</b>                         | <b>14329 Occupational Health</b>    |
| <b>75 Cripps Health Centre (950 1654 external)</b> |                                     |

# University Safety Office

The Safety Office is situated on the lower ground floor of the Biology Building at University Park. The role of the Office is guiding the development and implementation of the University's safety policies and procedures and providing support to all sections of the University.

There is a considerable amount of health and safety legislation which applies to the University's activities and a key role is to enable the various sections of the University to work within this in a way which is sensible, cost effective and safe.

The work of the Safety Office covers all aspects of health and safety, including work with ionising radiation, fire precautions and arrangements for the disposal of hazardous wastes. The diversity of the University's work seems to attract most of the health and safety legislation around, so there is an interesting mix of the exotic, such as genetically manipulated radioactively labelled micro-organisms, and the mundane, such as the tem-



perature of someone's office.

We aim to provide through training, or clear information or procedures, the means to enable the range of these hazards to be controlled by the people doing the work and consequently for the legislation to be

complied with. A summary of the principal training courses is contained on page 4.

The Safety web page contains general information, specific University policies or procedures (accident reporting to risk assessment, chemicals to display screen equipment), standard forms, links to external information sites, training course dates and our library of safety videos. The minutes from the Safety Committee and Statutory Safety Committee are also published here.

Along with the wide range of legislation through which we attempt to steer a safe course there are a number of enforcement agencies with which we also liaise. These include the Health and Safety Executive

(HSE) for general safety issues including reporting of certain types of accident; the Environment Agency for some aspects of the use of radioactive materials or for the disposal of certain types of waste; the Fire Service regarding some aspects of the University's fire precautions; and Trading Standards Officers, mainly in relation to our licensed petroleum stores.

The Safety Office also works closely with the University's Occupational Health staff and with the Radiation Protection Advisors at the University and City Hospitals.

The Safety Office staff comprises:

John Sutherland, Safety Officer;

Ann Hallam and Sarah Watson, Asst Safety Officers;

Harry Zuranski, Safety Technician and

Bob Armstrong, Fire Safety Advisor.

Paula Campbell is the Office Administrator and will usually be the first point of contact

Please email [Paula.Campbell@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:Paula.Campbell@nottingham.ac.uk) or phone ext. 13401.

## Occupational Health at the University

The University provides a comprehensive Occupational Health Service with the aims of *preventing ill health* in the workplace and *promoting and maintaining good health* in the workplace. The OH service includes:

**Health Surveillance** such as pre-employment screening for some occupations; medical examinations in relation to certain hazards e.g. asbestos, ionising radiation, lasers; regular health checks for groups of workers exposed to particular hazards e.g. respiratory sensi-



tisers; immunity checks and vaccinations for employees who need to be protected against infectious diseases whilst at work; and advice to employees on long-term sickness absence.

**Workplace assessments.**

Occupational Health staff can look at the health implications from the working environment to support risk assessment. If there are certain issues that are of special concern to you, then Occupational Health may be contacted directly.

**Record Systems and Research.** Individual occupational health records are maintained for as long as is legally necessary. This can be up to forty years. The staff also correlate statistics to assess whether hazards are under control.

**Health Education.** Advice and education about the work-

ing environment is available. This often overlaps to include advice on more general problems, such as diet and smoking. OH staff look at these health needs in relation to the problems they can cause.

**Confidential Support Service.**

Occupational Health maintains high standards of confidentiality. The staff also have contacts with local specialised counselling agencies to whom they may refer an individual for specific counselling if they consider this appropriate with their client's consent.

**Curative Services.** Occupational Health plays a small role in providing a treatment service. Since there are other facilities nearby, OH only provides a referral agency. There is no need to duplicate a GP or Accident and Emergency Service.



**First Aid Training.** OH runs regular and frequent first aid courses. These train staff to be able to provide emergency care in the workplace. It is necessary for your manager to nominate you if you wish to become a qualified first aider. In addition, there are 'Essentials of First Aid' sessions lasting two to three hours to provide the opportunity to become acquainted with the basics.

**Rehabilitation.** Advice is available to ensure that individuals with disabilities or health problems are not inappropriately placed in their work.

**Contacting Occupational Health.** Please do not hesitate to ask us if you think we can help.

Phone 14329 or email [linda.allen@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:linda.allen@nottingham.ac.uk)

# Working on computers every day of your working life? .....then read on...

Since you have received this newsletter it is likely that your computer will play a significant part in your working life. I hope that the following information about safe use of display screen equipment (DSE) will be useful.

The health effects that may arise from working with DSE are as follows:

- **Bodily fatigue,**
- **Upper limb disorders (including pains in the neck, arms, elbows, wrists, hands and fingers),**
- **Temporary eye strain.**

The key to minimising the risk of such health problems is in the layout of the workstation and the breaking up of the day's activities.

The diagram summarises the key aspects.

## Workstation Layout

The desk, chair, display screen equipment, telephone, waste paper basket, in-tray are all part of the workstation and can all play a part in how we sit at the desk.

## The sort of problems you may experience:

The desk may be too narrow and so the screen may be either too close to you, leaving insufficient room for movement of the keyboard, or moved to one corner of the desk, causing an awkward twist of the body.

The desk surface being too thick may prevent you from raising the chair to the correct height by obstructing your legs. This can mean that your wrists do not meet the keyboard at a comfortable angle.

The chair may not be correctly adjusted to suit you, the back may not be providing sufficient support, or the arms may prevent you sitting up close to the desk.

If you do a lot of hard copy work and place the papers to one side of your keyboard, you may suffer neck strain as a result of repeatedly looking between screen and hard copy. Not a problem for a few minutes but most of us spend a little longer than that on the computer!

Extensive use of the mouse may cause wrist problems.

All of the above, with time, may cause upper limb disorders. In extreme cases, if allowed to persist, these prob-

lems can actually develop into serious medical conditions from which it is difficult to get better without stopping the computer work altogether.

## Avoiding constant uninterrupted computer work

Breaking up DSE tasks, thus avoiding long periods of concentrated computer work, can help the body to relax out of the static posture it has to maintain at the computer. This helps prevent fatigue.

Even a few minutes spent photocopying, filing or taking a telephone call can help. It is recommended that frequent short changes in activity are taken, e.g. 5 minutes after each half-hour at the computer.

When not working on the computer, avoid close work which continues to tire out the eyes.

## The legal aspects?

There are regulations specifically relating to the safe use of Display Screen Equipment. These require the University to ensure that the workstations of DSE 'users' are assessed for ergonomic suitability, that users receive instruction on safe use of DSE and that they have a right to an eye test (see later sections).

The University policy defines a 'user' as working with DSE for more than 2 hours a day when averaged over the week. However, there may be some individuals who spend less time than this in total but routinely have lengthy intensive sessions (say 1 to 1.5 hours solid) so these may also be 'users'.

If designated as a 'user' by your School/Department, you should complete the workstation checklist and forward it to your local DSE assessor or Safety Officer. If you are in doubt about who to contact, call the University Safety Office (13301). You can find the workstation checklist at:

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/safety/forms/dse-checklist6-04.doc>

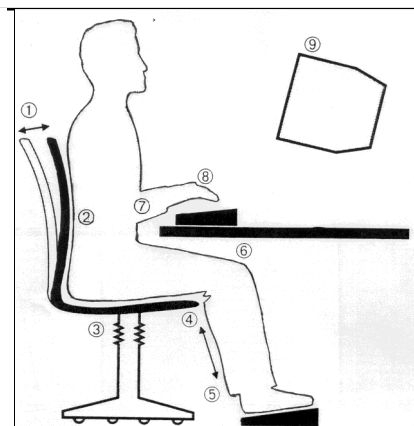
## Eye tests

'Users' are entitled to eye and eyesight tests. To organise this through the University you must complete the appropriate form and make an appointment with Occupational Health. If Occupational Health identify any problems with your middle vision (the crucial part for computer work) they will advise you to visit an optician.

If you are one of the few people who require glasses specifically for computer work, the University will cover the cost of the eye test and glasses (lens and basic frame). For more details on the policy concerning eye tests, refer to: <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/safety/publications/circulars/dse-eye.html>

## Laptops

Working with laptops, particularly for prolonged periods, can more easily cause the ill-health conditions associated with DSE work. This is mainly because of the small, confined nature of the laptop itself and the postures we adopt to use the



- 1) Good seat adjustability
- 2) Good lumbar support
- 3) Seat height adjustable from seated position
- 4) No pressure on underside of knees, thighs and backs
- 5) Foot support for smaller users
- 6) Space to enable and encourage postural change
- 7) Forearms approximately horizontal
- 8) Minimal extension, flexion or deviation of wrists
- 9) Screen height and angle should allow comfortable position

equipment.

If your main computer is a laptop or you make extensive use of a laptop, you must use a docking station with separate mouse and keyboard. This ensures a more ergonomic set up and minimise the risk of ill-health effects.

## Training and information

An on-line DSE safety training package is freely available at: <http://www.learninglink.ac.uk/site.htm>

Further information specifically for DSE users can be found at:

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/safety/publications/circulars/dse-safe-use.htm>

# Health and Safety Training Courses

A range of internal health and safety courses are available. Some may be of immediate relevance to your work, others may become relevant in due course. A full listing with dates can be found on the Safety Office web page at:

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/safety/intrain.htm>

## General Courses

Accident Investigation  
Assessing for Safe Use of DSE  
Assessment of Manual Handling Operations  
Essentials of First Aid.  
Evacuation Chair training  
Fire Safety Training.  
Infection Risks.  
Moving and Handling.  
Personal Safety.  
Risk Assessment  
Safe Use of Display Screen Equipment (DSE).

Safety at Work.  
Skin Care Training.  
Basic Workshop Safety

## Specialised Courses

Biological Safety.  
Cryogenics Safety  
First Aid at Work  
Use of Defibrillators  
Inspection and Testing of Portable Electrical Equipment  
Radiation Safety  
Safe Use of Lasers.  
School Safety Officer Induction  
Radiation Protection Supervisors.  
Safe Use of Laboratory Gases